

INCOMING TELEGRAM*Department of State*~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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FROM: Basra

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 26, November 3, 9 a.m.

SENT DEPARTMENT 26, REPEATED INFORMATION BAGHDAD 21, LONDON 6,
DHAHRAN 3, TEHRAN 3, KHORRAMSHAHR 3.

DHAHRAN FOR DLG

Reference: DEPTTEL 16, 31st, sent Tehran 1295, Baghdad 1318,
Khorramshahr 11, Dhahran 285, London 3520.Discussions situation acting Director Iraqi Port Administrator
today revealed Iraqi attitude following points:

1. Only Iranian Government ships previously exempted require-
ment fly Iraqi flag and take Iraqi pilot. Commercial vessels
registered Iran not (repeat not) previously exempted.
2. Iraqi port authority concerned with safety navigation on
Shatt, believe this requires centralized control operations
entire river. They profess non-interest in political questions,
point out necessity safe operations for both Iran and Iraq
commercial interests, especially oil shipments.
3. According their interpretation boundary line, Khosroabad
is Iraqi waters, since jetties extend beyond low water mark.
Only Abadan and Khorramshahr Iranian ports by special treaty
agreement.
4. Acting Director General informed me entire Shatt Iraqi
territorial waters under treaty, said any foreign ship refusing
fly Iraqi flag violates this status. If required by Iranians,
should be subject discussion between company and Iranian
Government if necessary in conjunction with American Government.
Iraqi position clear under international law.

I got

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-2- 26, November 3, 9 a.m. from Basra

I got impression this matter not (repeat not) viewed as serious threat Iraq sovereignty by officials port authority, but as danger navigation and embarrassment their relations with Iranians. I assumed acting Director General anxious avoid being involved issue, wished clarify issue as it affected American interests. Really was that no (repeat no) issue existed between Iraq and Iran, only between Iranians and companies operating in Iran over compliance with legitimate Iraqi regulations. They appear hold American company responsible for compliance illegal directives by Iranian Government. In re Iraq army movement, all available information indicates forces widely spread out in desert away from river, not (repeat not) in position take offensive action.

Summary: Iraqi port authority officials taking slightly pained attitude towards what they regard as Iranian efforts upset smoothly working procedures under treaty between two countries.

Recommendations: Try to get Iranians discuss subject administration of Shatt with Iraq Government directly, take no (repeat no) further unilateral action, which could lead ill feeling towards American Government; suspicion we are insitgating Iranians against Iraq. CENTO pact under heavy press attack, this could feed fires.

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